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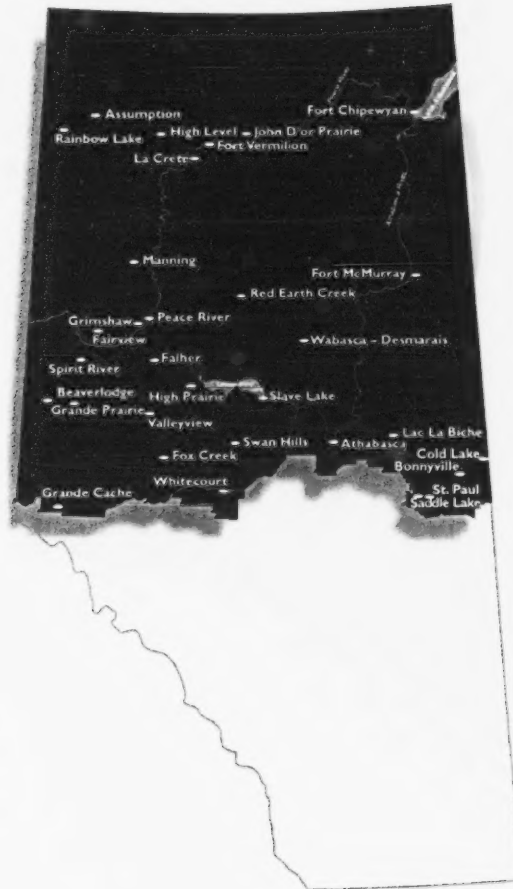
Northern
Alberta
Development
Council

PROFESSIONAL WORKFORCE SCAN 2010

A multi-sector summary of employment trends across
Alberta's north

APRIL 2010

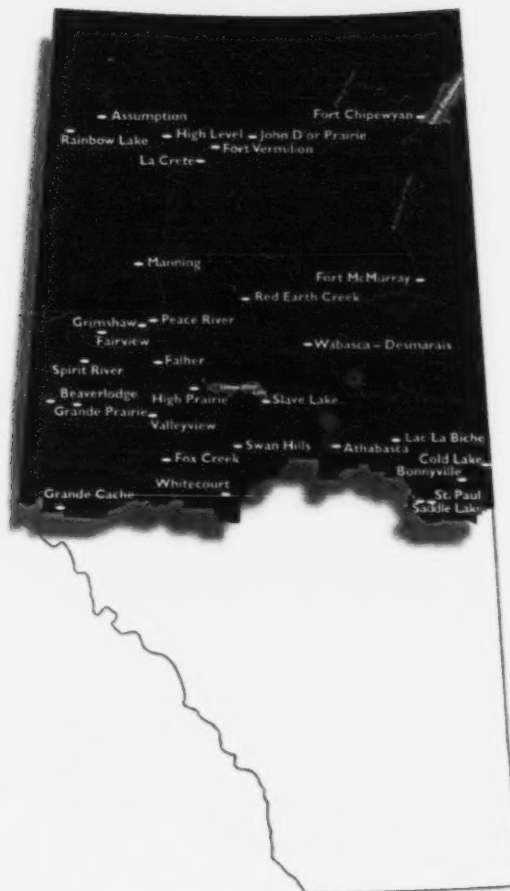
THE NADC REGION



The Northern Alberta Development Council region represents 60% of Alberta's landmass and only 9% of the Province's total population. The region has:

- 100% of the province's mineable oil sands development
- 21% of provincial crop production
- 10% of provincial livestock production
- 75% of the forestry portion of Alberta's gross domestic product

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Executive Summary

In April 2010, the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) completed the *Professional Workforce Scan 2010*. Its goal was to gain a clearer picture of the current and future workforce trends across northern Alberta.

The recent downturn in the global economy and the slowdown in Alberta's oil sands has been an overarching factor when it comes to northern Alberta's businesses and its workforce. Across all of the 13 sectors surveyed, the largest challenge for northern businesses is surviving the global economic slowdown. Although some sectors such as agriculture, business and law report stable employment opportunities, these sectors are somewhat sheltered from the resource-based economy. One sector that is showing employment growth is the social services sector. Due to the economic downturn this sector has seen an increase in the number of Albertans seeking social assistance and rehabilitation. Overall, however, most sector representatives expressed optimism. Respondents believe in a gradual economic improvement especially in the oil, mining and gas sector.

Looking forward to the next three to five years, respondents believe that a gradual upturn in the Canadian economy will bring better employment opportunities for northern Alberta. Sectors such as construction, education, government and transportation all indicate coming staff shortages due to retiring baby boomers and an overall aging population. This demographic trend coupled with a rebounding economy is expected to cause recruitment and retention challenges for companies and organisations across the north. It is expected that sectors outside of the oil and gas industry will again have to vie with the oil sector for skilled workers willing to live, work and grow in Alberta's rural northern communities.

To meet these challenges recruiters will continue to rely on the traditional practices of word of mouth and local newspaper advertising to find the right person for their organisation. As well recruiting with the use of on-line social media becoming a tool of choice for recruiters tasked with engaging a new generation of skilled, educated and young employees.

Workforce challenges facing businesses and organisations in northern Alberta have also been reported by other government agencies, sector groups and representatives. This report drew on key documents prepared by Alberta Employment and Immigration, as well as sector specific reports. Not surprisingly, all agreed that the current global economic climate has had a profound impact on northern Alberta's resource-based economy. This slowdown has given rise to many short term challenges but it has also delayed the challenges northern Alberta will likely face in the future. As most northern businesses grapple with current economic headwinds, many believe the long term challenges of replacing a retiring baby boomer workforce in a rebounding economy will be the next test for northern Alberta and its workforce.

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Introduction

In April 2010, the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) completed the *Professional Workforce Scan 2010*. Its goal was to gain a clearer picture of the current and future workforce trends across northern Alberta. By developing and conducting an online questionnaire of 14 different employment sectors*, the NADC aimed to achieve the following:

- Identify the educational programs that are currently and increasingly in demand by northern employers
- Recognize the educational programs that are experiencing a low or declining demand in the north
- Highlight what type of employees northern managers find difficult to recruit
- Spot future trends managers expect to affect hiring in their sector

Furthermore, the information presented in this report is intended to:

- Advise the NADC Bursary Selection Committee during its annual selection of bursary recipients (for more information about NADC bursaries visit: www.benorth.ca)
- Provide career counsellors and students with a general overview of future workforce demands across northern Alberta

Method

Selection of Participants

For this scan, 600 contacts from across 14 sectors were selected and encouraged to complete an online questionnaire. Emails for participating respondents were gained from NADC's existing contact list and through an extensive online search of industry contacts. To ensure the best possible response across sectors and geographical regions, potential participants were chosen using the following criteria:

- Managers and human resource representatives
- Ability to provide a sector-wide view
- Geographical balance across Alberta's north
- Balance of public / private sector

Participants were also encouraged to forward the link to their network of associates both within and outside their industry.

Distribution of Survey

Since the early 1990s the NADC has commissioned a workforce scan every two or three years. The most recent was completed in 2007. In contrast to previous years, the 2010 scan was distributed using an email containing a link to an online survey. Using this approach, the NADC intended to reach a wider audience while reducing the cost of mailing and faxing survey sheets.

* Agriculture and Food Processing; Business Administration and Law; Communication; Construction, Manufacturing & Trades; Education; Finance & Insurance; Government & Administration; Hospitality, Recreation & Tourism; Logging, Forestry & Wood Industries; Medical & Health Care; Mining, Oil & Gas; Retail & Wholesale Trade; Social Services; Transportation & Utilities

Data Collected

Contacts who accepted the email invitation were greeted with an introductory page outlining the NADC's intended objectives. Participants were reminded of the benefit their input would provide their sector. Participants were asked to reply to the following questions:

- Are employment opportunities in your sector growing, stable, or declining? Explain why.
- What changes do you anticipate in employment opportunities in your sector in the next three to five years?
- What recruitment and hiring practices are currently being used in your sector?
- How do you expect recruitment and hiring practices for your sector to change in the next three to five years?

Participants were then asked to review a list of post-secondary programs related to their sector and:

- Rate whether the fields of study were in low, medium or high demand
- Identify which employees with training in those particular fields they expected to find difficult in recruiting

Of the 600 email invitations sent out 136 questionnaires (22.6%) were completed online or over the phone with an NADC research officer. The scan successfully reached its target of 110 survey responses with no less than seven responses per sector.

Report Structure

This report contains sector specific comments and rankings provided by the respondents. A literature review is presented as supporting information. To maintain confidentiality, this report does not contain respondents' identity.

Limitations

With an average of ten responses per sector, the Professional Workforce Scan is a *general* overview of northern Alberta's current and future workforce trends. In 2010, the Finance and Insurance sector was not included in the report due to a low response rate.

Agriculture and Food Processing

From the agriculture and food processing industry seven responses were recorded. The respondents represented regional agricultural societies and economic development organisations from Alberta's northwest region.

Current Employment Opportunities

When asked for insight on the current state of employment opportunities in their sector, four respondents suggested that it was stable because:

- The agricultural and food processing sector not being directly linked to other areas of the economy
- There is a consistent market for food products

Two respondents indicated that the sector was in decline due to:

- Low wages
- Low commodity prices
- Ever-decreasing number of farms and processing plants

One respondent in particular cited the decreasing number of registered agriculture students at the college in Fairview as the main reason for a decline in employment.

Future Employment Opportunities

When asked about changes in employment opportunities in their sector, two respondents suggested a steady decrease mainly due to the ever-decreasing number of agricultural producers in northern Alberta. Three respondents indicated a growing demand for food products and the ability to recruit foreign farm hands as a factor for growth over the next three to five years.

Current and Future Recruiting Practices

Participants identified the following recruiting practices employed in their sector:

- Ads in local papers
- Foreign recruitment
- Internet job boards
- Word of mouth

Field of Study Ratings

The following High Demand programs are based on an average of at least two scores by respondents. Programs that were also identified by at least one respondent as Hard to Recruit are marked with an asterisk (*).

High Demand

Agricultural Mechanic - Apprentice
Agricultural Mechanic - Journeyman
Agricultural Technology - Diploma*
Animal Health Technology - Diploma
Heavy Equipment Technology - Certificate
Heavy Equipment Technology - Diploma
Heavy Equipment Technology - Apprentice

Other Programs Added

High Demand (Continued)

Heavy Equipment Technology - Journeyman

Veterinary Medicine - Doctorate*

Sector Issues and Challenges As Seen By Others

The responses from this sector are consistent with Alberta Employment and Immigrations' (AE&I) 2009 Agricultural Industry Profile¹ and its 2007 Market and Economic Indicators Dashboard report for the sector². Both reports noted that the agriculture industry in Alberta has been in a steady state of decline since 1999 (2.6% annually) due to a shift from small family farms to large-scale family and corporate agricultural enterprises. The reports also noted that urban economies, higher wages and plentiful jobs within the oil and gas sector were luring an increasing number of young people away from rural areas creating labour issues for Alberta's rural economies.

¹ Government of Alberta, (2009). Industry Profile Agricultural Industry. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/LMI/LMI-IP_agriculture.pdf

² Government of Alberta, (2007). Labour Market and Economic Indicators Dashboard: Agriculture & Agri-Food Industry. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/WIA/WIA-ET_inform_dash_agriculture.pdf

Business Administration and Law

The business administration and law sector had eight responses. The respondents represented:

- Chambers of commerce
- Counties
- Law and accounting practices
- Regional economic development organisations

Current Employment Opportunities

In this sector, only one respondent believed current employment opportunities were growing and one believed it was declining. Six respondents replied that employment opportunities in this sector were stable. They noted that accounting and law firms were sheltered from the recession as businesses' continually require accounting and legal work. Two respondents predicted a stable employment state as short-term with an increase in business approaching by the end of 2010 and into 2011. One respondent identified an increase in work for oil sands servicing companies as an indication of growth in the Fort McMurray region.

Future Employment Opportunities

When asked what changes in employment opportunities they anticipated for over the next three to five years, participants agreed that a steady growth would take place. Respondents reasoned that with a steady growth in the overall economy and a 'bounce back in the oil sands', employment opportunities would increase in the future. One respondent believed that employment prospects in the Peace Country would definitely grow with the building of a nuclear power plant in the region. Another law professional highlighted the difficulty his firm faces in recruiting young lawyers who are willing to move out of the cities and into rural areas. This respondent expected difficulties in recruiting young lawyers to meet a growing economy and practice.

Current and Future Recruiting Practices

Respondents identified the following recruiting practices employed in their sector:

- Internet and social media
- Local newspapers
- Scholarships
- Summer employment leading to full time employment
- University recruitment
- Word of mouth

Field of Study Ratings

The following High Demand programs are based on an average of at least two scores by respondents. Programs that were also identified by at least one respondent as Hard to Recruit are marked with an asterisk (*).

High Demand

Business Administration – Degree*

Business Administration – Masters

Other Programs Added

Sector Issues and Challenges As Seen By Others

AE&I reported in its 2009 Professional, Scientific and Technical Services Industry Profile an expected growth of employment opportunities of 2.6% annually from 2009 to 2013 for the business and law sector. This growth is expected to provide a total of 14.5% of all new jobs across Alberta between 2009 and 2013.³

³ Government of Alberta, (2009). Industry Profile Professional, Scientific and Technical Services Industry. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/LMI/LMI-IP_professional_technical.pdf

Communications

The communications sector had seven responses. These included representatives from Internet service providers, radio broadcasters and newspaper industries.

Current Employment Opportunities

When asked about the current state of employment opportunities in their sector, four responses suggested that it was stable. Three identified their sector as growing due to an increasing demand for communication technology throughout the region.

Future Employment Opportunities

When asked about future employment opportunities, responses from this sector identified their customer's growing use of the Internet to access their products. This move to online content also meant a growing need for people trained in technology.

Current and Future Recruiting Practices

The following recruiting practices were identified for recruiting:

- Headhunting from competitors
- Online recruiting
- Targeted ads

Field of Study Ratings

The following High Demand programs are based on an average of at least two scores by respondents. Programs that were also identified by at least one respondent as Hard to Recruit are marked with an asterisk (*). Additionally, programs that respondents felt were needed within their sector but were not mentioned in the scan are also listed.

High Demand

Communications Studies – Degree
Journalism, News Reporting – Diploma
Journalism, News Reporting – Degree

Other Programs Added

Internet installer
Internet service representatives

Sector Issues and Challenges As Seen By Others

In the Alberta Occupational Demand Outlook 2009-2013 a below average labour demand for occupations in the communications industry² is projected.⁴ Conversely, in its 2009 Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Industry Dashboard report, AE&I found that a significant challenge in hiring qualified employees will be experienced by the sector. The report noted that across Canada, universities are struggling to meet industry demand for trained ICT professionals leaving some Canadian communication companies to look abroad for the critical skills needed to fill shortages in the industry.⁵

² Announcers and performers; Writing, translating and public relations professionals; Photographers, graphic arts technicians and co-coordinating occupations in motion pictures, broadcasting and the performing arts.

⁴ Government of Alberta, (2009). Alberta Modified Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS) Outlook 2009 - 2013, Industry Employment Outlook. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/LMI/LMI-LMF_2009-13_cops.pdf

⁵ Government of Alberta, (2007). Labour Market and Economic Indicators Dashboard: Information and Communication Technology Industry. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/WIA/WIA-ET_inform_dash_information.pdf

Construction, Manufacturing and Trades

The construction, manufacturing and trades sector recorded seven replies. The respondents represented environmental consultants, development organisations, construction and machining companies.

Current Employment Opportunities

Two respondents described growth in employment opportunities and labour shortages in their sector. Four respondents described economic recovery due to continuing work in niche areas an example such as tree removal. One respondent described an economic downturn due to a slowdown in the oil and gas sector.

Future Employment Opportunities

Professionals in this sector foresaw a general growth in future employment within their sector. A slow but sure recovery in the economy would bring an increase in demand for quality workers especially in the skilled trades sector. One respondent identified the retirement of baby boomers as a sign of future growth in employment opportunities. Another person noted that as the general economy improves, employers in small northern communities are going to find it difficult to recruit experienced workers. To meet this challenge the respondent noted that the only solution was to train existing employees.

Current and Future Recruiting Practices

When asked about future recruiting practices four respondents described the difficulty of recruiting and retaining experienced and qualified employees. One participant described the challenge in recruiting and retaining dedicated young employees who value the quality of work as much as a good pay check. Current practices include:

- National job bank advertisements
- Newspaper advertisements
- Personal recommendations
- Recruiters

Field of Study Ratings

The following High Demand programs are based on an average of at least two scores by respondents. Programs that were also identified by at least one respondent as Hard to Recruit are marked with an asterisk (*). Additionally, programs that respondents felt were needed within their sector but were not mentioned in the scan are also listed.

High Demand

Automotive Service Technology - Journeyman
Carpenter - Journeyman
Diesel Mechanic - Certificate
Electrician - Apprentice
Electrician - Journeyman
Heavy Equipment Technology - Certificate
Heavy Equipment Technology - Diploma
Heavy Equipment Technology - Apprentice*
Heavy Equipment Technology - Journeyman*

Other Programs Added

Experienced and Skilled Local Operators
Skilled Linesmen
Utility Tree Trimmer (UTT)
Utility tree worker (UTW)

High Demand (Continued)

Machinist – Journeyman*

Refrigeration Mechanic – Apprentice*

Refrigeration Mechanic – Journeyman*

Sector Issues and Challenges As Seen By Others

In its annual assessment of the Alberta construction industry workforce, the Construction Sector Council (CSC) found similar issues to affect current and future employment opportunities. The CSC also felt that as the current recession recedes in 2010 and with a revival in commodity prices for 2011, construction projects and employment opportunities would come back on stream in 2013. CSC also noted the demand for workers created from baby boomers retiring would actually exceed the demand for new workers required for future construction activity. This demographic trend of an aging and retiring population would gradually erode the available workforce and create labour shortages. To add to this, AE&I noted in its Construction Industry Dashboard that the reluctance of many construction workers to work in camps, the province's aging skilled construction workforce and the difficulty in attracting large numbers of workers from elsewhere in Canada will be a challenge to the future of Alberta's construction sector.⁶

⁶ Government of Alberta, (2007). Labour Market and Economic Indicators Dashboard: Construction Industry. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/WIA/WIA-ET_inform_dash_construction.pdf

Education

Thirteen responses from the education sector were received. Respondents from this sector represented elementary, secondary and post-secondary schools, libraries, school divisions and colleges.

Current Employment Opportunities

Five respondents from this sector believed that employment opportunities were declining. Three respondents believed that the sector was stable. The decline and stability of employment within the sector was attributed to:

- Existing hiring freezes
- Government cutbacks
- Slowdown in the economy

Two respondents described that growth in education employment opportunities were due to:

- Population growth
- Rebounding economy

Future Employment Opportunities

When asked about the future of employment opportunities in the education sector the majority of respondents believed there would be a slow and stable growth. The two trends highlighted included:

- Increased number of baby boomers retiring
- Significant turnover within a year or two of a new teacher starting

Current and Future Recruiting Practices

Respondents in the education sector identified a wide range of recruiting tools and practices used currently in their sector:

- Aboriginal job shadow program
- Financial incentives such as bursary programs, interest free loans, relocation incentives, and subsidized housing
- Mentorship programs
- Mobile recruitment teams
- Nationwide online advertising and online hiring
- Newspaper advertising
- Recruitment fairs

Field of Study Ratings

The following High Demand programs are based on an average of at least two scores by respondents. Programs that were also identified by at least one respondent as Hard to Recruit are marked with an asterisk (*). Additionally, programs that respondents felt were needed within their sector but were not mentioned in the scan are also listed.

High Demand

Aboriginal Child & Family Services – Diploma

Education: Math – Degree*

Education: Native Studies – Degree*

Other Programs Added

Assessor

High Demand (Continued)

French Immersion: Secondary – Degree*

Psychology – PhD

Special Education – Degree*

Speech Language Pathology – Masters*

Sector Issues and Challenges As Seen By Others

According to the Alberta Occupational Demand Outlook 2009-2013, the education sector in Alberta is expected to record an above average labour demand for:

- Educational counsellors
- Secondary and elementary school teachers
- University professors and assistants

A below average demand is expected for college and other vocational instructors.⁷ AE&I expect that approximately 9,500 jobs will be created in the education sector.⁸

⁷ Government of Alberta, (2009). Alberta Modified Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS) Outlook 2009 - 2013, Industry Employment Outlook. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/LMI/LMI-LMF_2009-13_cops.pdf

⁸ Government of Alberta, (2009). Industry Profile Educational Services Industry. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/LMI/LMI-IP_educational_services.pdf

Government and Administration

The largest number of responses, 32 in total, was received from professionals representing the government and administration sector. Respondents from this sector represented municipal districts, counties, Métis settlements, towns, cities, villages, First Nations and provincial ministries.

Current Employment Opportunities

Of the 32 respondents from this sector 15 believed that the government and administration sector was stable. Respondents from the municipal government sector believed that employment in their area of business was stable. This sector does not have a history of increasing or decreasing positions with the state of the economy. Their counterparts in the provincial government felt that despite a government wide hiring freeze, employment in their sector was stable. With no hiring and with a large number of current employees having to hold off with their retirement plans, respondents felt that new employment opportunities would not arise soon.

Six respondents saw growth in employment opportunities. Growth in municipalities and the continued expansion of service required additional staff to deliver quality government run services.

Five respondents felt that employment opportunities were declining. They highlighted the provincial hiring freeze and reduced funding.

Future Employment Opportunities

When asked to consider what future employment opportunities are likely to arise in the sector, an overwhelming number of respondents highlighted the increased demand for qualified administrators to replace a retiring baby boomer workforce. Most respondents were optimistic about the upcoming openings for a younger generation of professionals. Some respondents believed that recruiting and retaining trained and experienced administrators to the north would continue to be a challenge. One respondent noted that this challenge required municipalities to consider planning and implementing succession, mentoring and training strategies to promote current administrators to management positions to make room for younger entry-level positions.

Though the majority of respondents focused on the impending retirement of the baby boomer generation, they also noted these additional trends:

- Increasing need for more public service administrators to address the recovery and growth of the oil and gas sector
- Increasing reliance on Non-Governmental Organisations and contractors as local government seeks to reduce costs
- Increasing shortage of municipal Chief Administrative Officers
- Requiring new administrators, accountants and maintenance professionals to address changing levels and types of service

Current and Future Recruiting Practices

Professionals in the education sector identified the following tools and practices being used to recruit young professionals to their sector:

- Aboriginal workforce projects

- Head hunters and professional HR agencies
- Internal training programs, secondments and transfers
- Internships and job shadowing
- Job postings on own organizations and industry/association specific websites
- Newspaper advertisements
- Open houses & job fairs
- Word of mouth

When asked to indicate what recruiting practices will likely be employed in their sector in the near future, respondents identified the following:

- Added bonuses
- Flex time
- Social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook

Field of Study Ratings

The following High Demand programs are based on an average of at least two scores by respondents. Programs that were also identified by at least one respondent as Hard to Recruit are marked with an asterisk (*). Additionally, programs that respondents felt were needed within their sector but were not mentioned in the scan are also listed.

High Demand

Building/Heating Inspector – Diploma*

Water and Wastewater Treatment – Degree*

Other Programs Added

Chief Administrative Officer

Licensed Heavy Equipment Mechanic

Sector Issues and Challenges As Seen By Others

With employment expected to grow at a moderate and steady rate, there is also a rising trend in the employment of contractors in municipal and provincial government.. The increased use of contractors is also intended to reduce costs and gain access to specialized expertise ,as this sector is expected by AE&I to face difficulty in attracting and retaining high quality staff.⁹

According to the Alberta Occupational Demand Outlook 2009-2013¹⁰ the following occupations within the government and administration sector are expected to experience:

Above Average Labour Demand

- Firefighters
- Managers in public administration
- Police officers
- Other protective services

Below Average Labour Demand

- Administrative and regulatory
- Consultants
- Judges, lawyers and Quebec notaries
- Policy and program officers
- Researchers

⁹ Government of Alberta, (2007). Labour Market and Economic Indicators Dashboard: Public Administration Industry. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/WIA/WIA-ET_inform_dash_publicadmin.pdf

¹⁰ Government of Alberta, (2009). Industry Profile Public Administration Industry. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/LMI/LMI-IP_public_admin.pdf

Hospitality, Recreation and Tourism

Seven replies from professionals within the hospitality, recreation and tourism sector were recorded. Respondents from this sector represented:

- Hotels
- Tourism associations

Current Employment Opportunities

When questioned about the current state of employment opportunities in their sector, six out of seven respondents believed that opportunities in their sector were growing. With the building of improved facilities, and a growth in visitors to Alberta's north, the indicators for a need for more employees and operators in the region were clear. Only one respondent from the sector felt that their industry was on stable footing. This respondent believed that new opportunities were coming about in the industry although slowing growth in the oil and gas sector would affect the hospitality sector.

Future Employment Opportunities

Respondents expected further growth in job opportunities in their sector over the next three to five years. One representative quoted a Government of Alberta report that employment in the accommodation and food services segment of the industry is expected to grow by 2.2 per cent annually. Over the next five years this will generate almost 10,913 new jobs by 2011.¹¹ Other respondents believed that with an increase in campgrounds, restaurants and other tourism focused business throughout Alberta's north, more tourism operators will be needed.

Current and Future Recruiting Practices

Hospitality, recreation and tourism professionals highlighted the Internet, newspaper and radio ads as the main practice of recruiting. Two respondents mentioned hiring of foreign workers and the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP)¹².

Field of Study Ratings

The following High Demand programs are based on an average of at least two scores by respondents. Programs that were also identified by at least one respondent as Hard to Recruit are marked with an asterisk (*). Additionally, programs that respondents felt were needed within their sector but were not mentioned in the scan are also listed.

High Demand

Computer Service Technology – Certificate
Computer Service Technology – Diploma
Cosmetology – Diploma
Global Tourism & Marketing – Degree*
Outdoor Education Specialist – Diploma
Personal Fitness Trainer – Diploma
Wildlife Outfitting and Guiding - Diploma

Other Programs Added

Adventure Guides
Operators

¹¹ Government of Alberta, (2007). Workforce Strategy for Alberta's Tourism & Hospitality Industry. Retrieved from: http://employment.alberta.ca/documents/WIA/WIA-BETW_tourism_strategy.pdf

¹² Government of Alberta, (2009). Summer Temporary Employment Program (STEP) Fact Sheet. Retrieved from: <http://employment.alberta.ca/CES/3158.html>

Sector Issues and Challenges As Seen By Others

Employment in Alberta's hospitality, recreation and tourism sector is expected to grow an average of 2.8% annually providing 11.0% of all new jobs throughout the province from 2009 to 2013.¹³ According to the Alberta Occupational Demand Outlook 2009-2013¹⁴ the following occupations within this sector are expected to experience:

Above Average Demand

- Accommodation managers
- Chefs and cooks
- Food and beverage service managers
- Food service managers

Below Average Demand

- Casino operators
- Tour and recreational guides

AE&I also indicated the following factors will significantly contribute to the labour challenges within the hospitality, recreation and tourism sector:

- Considerable lack of management skills¹⁵
- High turnover and need for continual training
- Retention issues of staff that are typically young and not necessarily committed to a career in the industry
- Seasonal nature of the sector is a barrier to continuity of staffing

¹³ Government of Alberta, (2009). Industry Profile Accommodation and Food Services Industry. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/LMI/LMI-IP_accommodation_food.pdf

¹⁴ Government of Alberta, (2009). Industry Profile Public Administration Industry. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/LMI/LMI-IP_public_admin.pdf

¹⁵ Government of Alberta, (2007). Labour Market and Economic Indicators Dashboard: Tourism Industry. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/WIA/WIA-ET_inform_dash_tourism.pdf

Logging and Forestry

Nine responses from the logging and forestry sector were recorded. Respondents in this sector represented:

- Contractors
- Forest industries
- Government

Current Employment Opportunities

When asked for their insight into the current state of employment opportunities in their sector, three respondents suggested that it was growing. Three believed it was stable. After a slow recovery in the American housing market and a recovery in lumber prices, some operations will be adding shifts, employees and production time. Stability in the sector was attributed to:

- Low employee turnover
- Low pricing
- Industry maintaining a status quo

Two respondents believed that employment opportunities were in a decline due to a lack of a market for finished wood products.

Future Employment Opportunities

When asked to identify what will change in the future, participants voiced a sense of optimism of an economic recovery in 2010 and 2011. New openings will come available due to:

- Baby boomers retiring
- Improved individual financial situation
- Increased demand for skilled trades
- Newer technology related to biomass manufacturing

One respondent indicated that employment opportunities are declining due to:

- Competition
- Downsizing
- Lean manufacturing
- Streamlining

Current and Future Recruiting Practices

Asked to identify what they believed to be smart practices in recruiting, one participant highlighted the challenge logging and forestry industries faced in recruiting skilled trades people as the general economy improved. This respondent believed that to meet the challenge, even though it was not the perfect solution, industries would have to begin training their existing employees.

Professionals identified the following tools and practices being used to recruit young professionals to their sector:

- Career fairs
- Co-op and apprenticeship programs
- Foreign labour recruitment
- Forestry and engineering publication ads

- Internal job postings
- Internet job boards
- Local high school recruitment
- Newspaper advertisements
- Recall of laid off workers
- Recruiting agencies
- Word of mouth

Field of Study Ratings

The following High Demand programs are based on an average of at least two scores by respondents. Programs that were also identified by at least one respondent as Hard to Recruit are marked with an asterisk (*). Additionally, programs that respondents felt were needed within their sector but were not mentioned in the scan are also listed.

High Demand

No programs received a High Demand average amongst respondents.

Other Programs Added

Foresters
Supervisors / Superintendents

Sector Issues and Challenges As Seen By Others

Significant growth in the logging and forestry sector is not expected in the near future. In the Alberta Occupational Demand Outlook 2009-2013¹⁶ a decline of 1.6% in employment opportunities is expected in 2010 before growing an average of 2.6% per year from 2011 to 2013. As employment levels within this sector stay stable, strong competition for workers from the energy sector, where higher wages and work are plentiful, may become a challenge for managers and recruiters.¹⁷

In its September 2009 Industry Profile report¹⁸ for the sector, AE&I noted that the long-term viability of the logging and forestry sector depends on the following industries:

- Converted paper products
- Exports
- Furniture
- Housing
- Paper
- Paperboard
- Printing
- Pulp
- Wood products manufacturing

¹⁶ Government of Alberta, (2009). Alberta Modified Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS) Outlook 2009 - 2013, Industry Employment Outlook. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/LMI/LMI-LMF_2009-13_cops.pdf

¹⁷ Government of Alberta, (2007). Labour Market and Economic Indicators Dashboard: Forestry and Forestry Products Industry. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/WIA/WIA-ET_inform_dash_forestry.pdf

¹⁸ Government of Alberta, (2009). Industry Profile Forestry and Forestry Products Industry. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/LMI/LMI-IP_forestry.pdf

Medical and Health Services

Eight responses were recorded from professionals in the medical and health services sector.

Respondents from this sector identified themselves as professionals working in:

- Dentistry
- Alberta Health Services
- Mental health
- Addiction services

Current Employment Opportunities

Three respondents indicated that employment opportunities within their industry were growing due to increased demand for services from a growing population. They indicated the sector was more stable than growing. Two respondents said that employment opportunities were declining. Reasons given by these respondents were cut backs in frontline services, a more centralized administration, and poor financial management.

Future Employment Opportunities

More opportunities for employment would result from:

- Increased budget
- Preferring to hire Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN) and less qualified people over Registered Nurses (RN)

Current and Future Recruiting Practices

Professionals in this sector identified the following recruiting practices:

- Online and print advertisements
- Post secondary recruitment
- Training Alberta born physicians

Field of Study Ratings

The following High Demand programs are based on an average of at least two scores by respondents. Programs that were also identified by at least one respondent as Hard to Recruit are marked with an asterisk (*). Additionally, programs that respondents felt were needed within their sector but were not mentioned in the scan are also listed.

High Demand

Clinical Psychology - Masters
Combined X-Ray & Lab Technology - Diploma
Computer Engineering Technology - Diploma
Computer Programming & Software - Diploma
Dental Assistant – Certificate
Dental Assistant – Diploma
Epidemiology - Masters
General Practice Medicine
Health Care Aide – Certificate
Health Promotion/Community Development – Degree
Health Promotion/Community Development – Masters
Health Records – Certificate

Other Programs Added

Addictions Councillor
Alberta Trained Medical Doctors
Life skill development

High Demand (Continued)

Nursing – Degree
Nursing Practitioner – Masters*
Nursing: Community Health Nurse – Degree
Nursing: Nutrition & Food Sciences – Degree
Nursing: Operating Room – Degree
Nutrition and Nutraceutical Sciences – Degree*
Occupational Therapy – Degree*
Orthopaedic Surgeon – MD
Pharmacy – Degree*
Pharmacy Technology – Certificate*
Pharmacy Technology – Diploma*
Physical Therapy – Degree*
Physical Therapy – Masters*
Physical Therapy Assistant – Diploma*
Practical Nurse – Diploma
Radiation Therapy – Diploma
Respiratory Technician – Diploma
Sonographer – Diploma
Specialist: Anaesthesia – MD*
Specialist: Cardiology – MD*
Specialist: Obstetrics Gynaecology – MD*
Specialist: Psychiatry – MD*
Specialist: Surgery – MD
Speech Language Pathology – Degree
Speech Language Pathology – Masters
Telecommunications Engineer Technology – Diploma

Sector Issues and Challenges As Seen By Others

In the Alberta Occupational Demand Outlook 2009-2013¹⁹, a growing demand for health service providers such as nurses, pharmacists, physical therapists, medical technologists and health-care aides is reported. In the same report, above average growth is expected for managers in health, social and community services while below average growth is projected for the following occupations²⁰:

- Assisting occupations in support of health services
- Medical technologists and technicians
- Nurse supervisors and registered nurses
- Physicians, dentists and veterinarians
- Technical occupations in dental health care
- Therapy and assessment professionals

²⁰ Government of Alberta, (2009). Alberta Modified Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS) Outlook 2009 - 2013, Industry Employment Outlook. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/LMI/LMI-LMF_2009-13_cops.pdf

²⁰ Government of Alberta, (2009). Industry Profile Health Care and Social Assistance Industry. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/LMI/LMI-IP_health_social.pdf

In addition to the above mentioned workforce challenges, AE&I also indicated that the following factors will contribute to the labour challenges within the medical and health sector:

- General aging and increasing retirement of health professionals and patients
- Recruitment of out of province health professionals
- Shortage of health professionals in rural and remote areas²¹

²¹ Government of Alberta, (2007). Labour Market and Economic Indicators Dashboard: Health Care Industry. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/WIA/WIA-ET_inform_dash_healthcare.pdf

Mining, Oil and Gas

From the mining, oil and gas industry seven responses were recorded. The respondents represented:

- Geomatic and survey companies
- Mining companies
- Oil developer and producer associations,

Current Employment Opportunities

Three respondents in this sector felt that even with a general slowdown in the economy, relatively decent oil prices have kept some projects moving forward keeping employment in the oil sector quite stable. Two other respondents were quite optimistic. A rebound in oil exploration and production along with several coal markets, especially the Chinese, has created a greater demand keeping employment opportunities growing. The last two respondents felt that with less activity in the oil and gas drilling/servicing sector, a declining economy did not bode well for employment within their sector.

Future Employment Opportunities

Respondents in the mining, oil and gas sector felt that growth would slowly occur requiring an increased demand for trained technical personnel. One industry representative believed that as the Canadian economy improved, industry would find it increasingly tougher to find and retain employees in their sector.

Current and Future Recruiting Practices

Professionals within the mining, oil and gas sector identified the following tools and practices being used to recruit young professionals to their sector:

- Canada wide and foreign recruitment
- Career fairs
- Newspaper and Internet advertising
- Secondary and Post-Secondary school recruitment
- Union hiring

Field of Study Ratings

The following High Demand programs are based on an average of at least two scores by respondents. Programs that were also identified by at least one respondent as Hard to Recruit are marked with an asterisk (*).

High Demand

Engineering - Degree
Engineering - Masters
Engineering - PhD
Engineering Petroleum - Degree
Environmental Conservation and Reclamation - Diploma
Environmental Engineering - Degree
Environmental Technology - Diploma
Exploration Geophysics - Degree
Gas Field Operator - Certificate

Other Programs Added

High Demand (Continued)

Geographic Information Services - Diploma
Geomatics Engineering - Diploma*
Geomatics Engineering - Degree
Geophysical Engineering – Degree
Instrument Mechanic – Journeyman
Millwright - Journeyman*
Mining Engineering - Degree
Soil Science - Degree
Survey Engineering - Degree

Sector Issues and Challenges As Seen By Others

In its Alberta Industry Profile for the mining, oil and gas sector, AE&I predicts that employment is expected to decline 1.2% in 2010 before growing on average 2.2% annually from 2011 to 2013. During this period, AE&I also expect 3,000 jobs to be created with an expected increase to 148,500 by 2013.²²

The Alberta Occupational Demand Outlook 2009 – 2013²³ projects a below average labour demand for the following occupations within the mining, oil and gas sector:

- Mine service workers and operators in oil and gas drilling
- Oil and gas drillers and related workers
- Supervisors
- Underground miners

Citing the sector's vulnerability to fluctuations in world oil prices and the fragile economy, AE&I's Labour Market and Indicator Dashboard for this sector illustrated the following labour and workforce challenges:

- Education system not responding fast enough to meet the demands of industry
- High levels of economic activity in other provinces and the U.S. hamper recruitment
- Inherent nature seasonal work
- Lasting perceptions of dangerous work and working conditions

²² Government of Alberta, (2007). Labour Market and Economic Indicators Dashboard: Mining, Oil and Gas Industry. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/WIA/WIA-ET_inform_dash_mining.pdf

²³ Government of Alberta, (2009). Alberta Modified Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS) Outlook 2009 - 2013, Industry Employment Outlook. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/LMI/LMI-LMF_2009-13_cops.pdf

Retail and Wholesale

Nine respondents were recorded from the retail and wholesale sector. The respondents represented various retail stores and Chambers of Commerce from across Alberta's north.

Current Employment Opportunities

Six respondents believed that employment opportunities within their sector were increasing. Respondents reasoned that although the economy has slowed down business was starting to pick up in the agricultural retail as it was not based on the wider economy. Two other respondents believed that employment within their sector was on a decline due to a slow economy, residents moving to bigger centres and expendable income not being what it used to be in the past. Only one respondent, from the automotive service industry, indicated a growth in employment opportunities in their industry reasoning that there was a constant demand for vehicles and fleet service in the north.

Future Employment Opportunities

Three respondents from this sector replied that they did not expect to see much future growth in employment within their sector. Five other respondents anticipated upcoming demand and even shortages in staff with computer and electronics training.

Current and Future Recruiting Practices

Professionals within the retail and wholesale sector identified the following tools and practices for recruiting employees:

- High School RAP program – Coop / Apprenticeship
- Job ads posted on location
- Job banks
- Local Newspaper advertisements
- Recruitment of foreign workers
- Word of mouth

Field of Study Ratings

The following High Demand programs are based on an average of at least two scores by respondents. Programs that were also identified by at least one respondent as Hard to Recruit are marked with an asterisk (*). Additionally, programs that respondents felt were needed within their sector but were not mentioned in the scan are also listed.

High Demand

Computer Service Technology - Certificate
Computer Service Technology - Diploma
Pharmacy - Degree
Pharmacy Technology – Certificate
Pharmacy Technology - Diploma

Other Programs Added

Aesthetics
Alternate Health
Auto electronics
Certified technicians
Computer repair
Consumer electronics
Food Safety
Massage Therapy - Spa Treatment
Mechanic
Salesman

Sector Issues and Challenges As Seen By Others

In its Retail and Wholesale Trade industry profiles, AE&I Employment expects a growth of 3.0% annually from 2010 to 2013 for employment opportunities in the retail sector while the wholesale trade industry is expected to grow on average 3.5% annually during the same period.

Social Services

Nine respondents from the social services sector were recorded. Respondents from this sector represented provincial, municipal, First Nations and Métis social service organisations.

Current Employment Opportunities

Three respondents from this sector felt that employment opportunities were growing despite a provincial government hiring freeze. One of the respondents believed that with a downturn in the economy there has been an increase in substance abuse, domestic violence and incarcerations – requiring more social workers, counsellors and therapists. Another three respondents said that employment opportunities were stable, as a result of the provincial government hiring freeze. Two respondents replied that it was in a decline due to the hiring freeze and a downturn in the economy.

Future Employment Opportunities

When asked to give their opinion about future trends, four respondents said they expected to see more opportunities arising with an increased demand for social services when the economy picks up. Another respondent foresaw more of a need for an alternative 'Wellness' and 'Healing' approach similar to traditional methods. This respondent also envisioned a need for more Aboriginal awareness and diversity training resulting from a high percentage of Aboriginal people in the social work system

Current and Future Recruiting Practices

Professionals described the following recruiting practices:

- Internships
- Job fairs
- New graduate recruitment
- Online and print advertisements
- Post secondary recruitment

Field of Study Ratings

The following High Demand programs are based on an average of at least two scores by respondents. Programs that were also identified by at least one respondent as Hard to Recruit are marked with an asterisk (*). Additionally, programs that respondents felt were needed within their sector but were not mentioned in the scan are also listed.

High Demand

Aboriginal Child & Family Services - Certificate
Aboriginal Child & Family Services - Diploma
Accounting / Computer Applications - Certificate
Addictions Counselling - Diploma
Addictions Counselling - Degree
Clinical Psychology - Masters
Community Development - Degree*
Early Childhood Development - Degree
Family Therapy - Masters
Human Resources & Labour Relations - Certificate

Other Programs Added

Medicine Wheel Training

High Demand (Continued)

Human Services - Certificate
Human Services - Diploma
Leadership - Masters
Mental Health Worker - Diploma
Native Studies - Degree
Nursing Psychiatric - Degree
Office Administration - Certificate
Political Science - Degree
Psychology - Degree
Psychology - Masters*
Psychology - PhD
Rehabilitation Practitioner - Diploma
Social Work - Aboriginal Specialization - Diploma
Social Work - Aboriginal Specialization - Degree*
Social Work – General - Diploma*
Social Work – General - Degree
Social Work – General - Masters*

Sector Issues and Challenges As Seen By Others

In its Alberta Industry Profile, AE&I projected a 2.2% annual growth for employment opportunities from 2009 to 2013 for the Health Care and Social Assistance industry. The Occupational Demand Outlook 2009-2013²⁴ projects an above average growth for employment opportunities for managers in health, social and community services.

²⁴ Government of Alberta, (2009). Alberta Modified Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS) Outlook 2009 - 2013, Industry Employment Outlook. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/LMI/LMI-LME 2009-13_cops.pdf

Transportation and Utilities

The transportation and utilities sector had seven responses representing:

- Air transport
- Trucking
- Utility companies

Current Employment Opportunities

When asked to gauge the state of current opportunities in their sector, three respondents believed that their sector was growing. One respondent from the utilities sector noted that the growth was due to more government projects in replacing aging utilities. Two respondents from the transportation industry cited more oil and gas work as the reason.

Three respondents said their sector was stable but was making a slow comeback. A respondent from the utilities industry believed that with population decreases the demand for water, wastewater and landfill has gone down and new employment opportunities were not evident. As for the aviation transport industry, one professional felt that employment was declining as customers economized by driving rather than flying.

Future Employment Opportunities

Two professionals from the aviation transport industry and one from the trucking industry identified retiring baby boomers and the difficulty of recruiting skilled trades as a challenge within their industry. A respondent from the waste and water utilities industry indicated a positive trend for future employment opportunities. More stringent provincial regulations would require more trained people to operate water systems on behalf of smaller communities.

Current and Future Recruiting Practices

The following recruiting practices were identified for this sector:

- Early trades training
- Internet ads
- Word of mouth

Field of Study Ratings

The following High Demand programs are based on an average of at least two scores by respondents. Programs that were also identified by at least one respondent as Hard to Recruit are marked with an asterisk (*). Additionally, programs that respondents felt were needed within their sector but were not mentioned in the scan are also listed.

High Demand

Diesel Mechanic - Certificate*
Electrical/Electronic Engineering - Degree
Electrician - Apprentice
Electrician - Journeyman
Emergency Medical Tech: Paramedic - Diploma
Engineering - Degree
Engineering - Masters

Other Programs Added

Class 3 Water Truck Drivers
Drivers
Heavy Equipment Operators
NAIT Wastewater Operations - Partner
with Aquatera

High Demand (Continued)

Engineering - PhD
Geography - Degree
Geological & Geophysical Technology - Diploma
Geological Engineering - Degree
Geomatics Engineering - Diploma
Geomatics Engineering - Degree
Geophysical Engineering - Degree
Heavy Equipment Technology - Certificate
Heavy Equipment Technology - Diploma
Heavy Equipment Technology - Apprentice
Heavy Equipment Technology – Journeyman

Sector Issues and Challenges As Seen By Others

According to the transportation and warehousing industry profile produced by AE&I employment in Alberta's transportation sector is expected to grow on average 1.9% annually from 2010 to 2013.²⁵ As in all sectors, AE&I has identified aging of the current labour force as a significant factor in current and anticipated workforce shortages within the transportation industry.²⁶

The following occupations were projected as having a below average labour demand in the Alberta Occupational Demand Outlook 2009-2013:²⁷

- Managers in construction and transportation
- Motor vehicle and transit drivers
- Supervisors - railway and motor transportation
- Train crew operators
- Transportation officers and controllers

²⁵ Government of Alberta, (2009). Industry Profile Transportation and Warehousing Industry. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/LMI/LMI-IP_transportation.pdf

²⁶ Government of Alberta, (2007). Labour Market and Economic Indicators Dashboard: Mining, Oil and Gas Industry. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/WIA/WIA-ET_inform_dash_transportation.pdf

²⁷ Government of Alberta, (2009). Alberta Modified Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS) Outlook 2009 - 2013, Industry Employment Outlook. Retrieved from: http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/LMI/LMI-LMF_2009-13_cops.pdf

High Demand Programs

The following list of programs includes those identified as High Demand in at least one sector.

Note that:

- Some programs are only included in one sector, and others are listed many times as they are relevant to many work places. For example, a Math Teacher is only included in the Education sector, Business Administration is included in many sectors.
- Within sectors the responses were averaged. Therefore, a program may have been rated in High Demand by some respondents but not appear on this list because it was rated low by others.
- To be included, a program received a rating by at least two respondents within the sector.

Programs marked with an asterisk (*) were identified by one or more respondents as Hard to Recruit.

Certificate	Aboriginal Child & Family Services
Diploma	Aboriginal Child & Family Services
Diploma	Addictions Counselling
Degree	Addictions Counselling
Apprentice	Agricultural Mechanic
Journeyman	Agricultural Mechanic
Diploma	Agricultural Technology *
Diploma	Animal Health Technology
Journeyman	Automotive Service Technology
Diploma	Building/Heating Inspector *
Degree	Business Administration *
Masters	Business Administration *
Journeyman	Carpenter
Masters	Clinical Psychology
Diploma	Combined X-Ray & Lab Technology
Degree	Communications Studies *
Degree	Community Development *
Diploma	Computer Engineering Technology *
Diploma	Computer Programming & Software
Certificate	Computer Service Technology
Diploma	Computer Service Technology
Diploma	Cosmetology
Certificate	Dental Assistant
Diploma	Dental Assistant
Degree	Dental Hygiene
MD	Dental Surgery
MD	Dentistry
Diploma	Denturist
Certificate	Diesel Mechanic *

Diploma	Dietary Technology
Degree	Early Childhood Development
Degree	Education – Math *
Degree	Education – Native Studies *
Apprentice	Electrician *
Journeyman	Electrician *
Degree	Engineering *
Masters	Engineering
PhD	Engineering
Degree	Engineering Petroleum
Dip/Cert	Engineering Technology *
Diploma	Environmental Conservation and Reclamation *
Degree	Environmental Engineering *
Diploma	Environmental Technology
Masters	Epidemiology
Degree	Exploration Geophysics
Degree	French Immersion - Secondary *
Certificate	Gas Field Operator
Diploma	Geographic Information Services *
Diploma	Geomatics Engineering *
Degree	Geomatics Engineering
Degree	Geophysical Engineering
Diploma	Global Tourism & Marketing *
Certificate	Health Care Aide
Certificate	Health Development and Administration
Masters	Health Promotion/Community Development
Certificate	Health Records
Certificate	Heavy Equipment Technology
Diploma	Heavy Equipment Technology
Apprentice	Heavy Equipment Technology *
Journeyman	Heavy Equipment Technology *
Certificate	Human Services
Diploma	Human Services
Journeyman	Instrument Mechanic
Diploma	Journalism, News Reporting
Degree	Journalism, News Reporting
Masters	Leadership *
Journeyman	Machinist *
Journeyman	Millwright *
Degree	Mining Engineering
Degree	Native Studies *
Degree	Nursing
Masters	Nursing Practitioner *
Degree	Nursing: Community Health Nurse
Degree	Nursing: Nutrition & Food Sciences
Degree	Nursing: Operating Room

Degree	Nutrition and Nutraceutical Sciences *
Degree	Occupational Therapy *
Certificate	Office Administration *
Diploma	Outdoor Education Specialist
Diploma	Personal Fitness Trainer
Degree	Pharmacy *
Certificate	Pharmacy Technology *
Diploma	Pharmacy Technology *
Degree	Physical Therapy *
Masters	Physical Therapy *
Diploma	Physical Therapy Assistant *
Diploma	Practical Nurse
Masters	Psychology *
PhD	Psychology *
Diploma	Recreation Therapy
Apprentice	Refrigeration Mechanic
Journeyman	Refrigeration Mechanic
Diploma	Social Work - Aboriginal Specialization
Degree	Social Work - Aboriginal Specialization *
Diploma	Social Work - General *
Degree	Social Work - General
Masters	Social Work - General *
Degree	Soil Science
Degree	Special Education *
MD	Specialist - Anaesthesia *
MD	Specialist - Cardiology *
MD	Specialist - Obstetrics Gynaecology *
MD	Specialist - Psychiatry *
MD	Specialist - Surgery
Degree	Speech Language Pathology *
Masters	Speech Language Pathology *
Diploma	Speech Therapy Assistant *
Degree	Survey Engineering *
Diploma	Telecommunications Engineer Technology
Doctorate	Veterinary Medicine *
Degree	Water and Wastewater Treatment *
Diploma	Wildlife Outfitting and Guiding

Getting in touch...

Your input on northern development priorities is important. Contact our office or an NADC member for further information.

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